



Linda S. Adams  
Secretary for  
Environmental Protection

**California Regional Water Quality Control Board**  
**North Coast Region**  
**John W. Corbett, Chairman**

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Arnold  
Schwarzenegger  
Governor

October 1, 2007

In the Matter of

**Water Quality Certification**

for the

**PG&E – GANNON SLOUGH GAS PIPELINE PROTECTION PROJECT**  
**WDID NO. 1B06033WNHU**

APPLICANT:	Pacific Gas and Electric Company
RECEIVING WATER:	Gannon Slough
HYDROLOGIC UNIT:	Eureka Plain Hydrologic Unit No. 110.00
COUNTY:	Humboldt
FILE NAME:	PG&E – Gannon Slough Gas Pipeline Protection Project

BY THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

1. On March 29, 2006, the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (Applicant) filed an application for water quality certification (certification) under section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1341) with the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, North Coast Region (Regional Water Board) for activities related to installation of a grout mattress and concrete revetment walls in Gannon Slough to protect an existing buried high pressure gas line that is exposed along the bank of Gannon Slough near Arcata. The Regional Water Board provided public notice of the application pursuant to title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 3858 on August 30, 2007, and posted information describing the project on the Regional Water Board's website. We did not receive any public comments on this project.
2. PG&E's high pressure gas pipeline 137B crosses beneath the Gannon Slough channel east of Highway 101, approximately 1.5 miles south of Arcata. Soft banks and tidal activity have resulted in bank erosion and exposure of a segment of the pipeline on the slough's left bank. The pipeline is an ongoing safety concern because the exposed pipeline is subject to corrosion and potential damage. The project involves covering the pipeline with a grout filled mattress and installation of revetment walls along both banks of the slough where the pipeline crosses to prevent additional bank erosion and to eliminate the exposure related safety concerns.
3. Implementation of the project will begin by isolating the water in the project area by installing two cofferdams in the slough, one approximately 25 feet north of the

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pipeline excavation activities and one approximately 25 feet south of the pipeline excavation activities. Cofferdam installation will occur during low tide. Pumps will be used to remove water from between the cofferdams and to move water around the isolated work area created by the cofferdams. All pump intakes will be screened to prevent aquatic species from being sucked into the pumps. A qualified biologist will monitor dewatering activities and will rescue any aquatic life captured within the isolated work area. Seepage into the isolated work area will be pumped to an upland area to allow sediments to settle prior to flowing back to the slough.

4. Following dewatering activities, the slough bottom will be excavated to a minimum depth of twelve inches below the existing slough bottom to accommodate installation of a grout mattress over the pipeline. Equipment used to excavate the slough bottom will be operated from the west bank of the slough between Highway 101 and the slough. Excavated sediment will be temporarily stockpiled and secured to prevent runoff into the slough. A 30 foot wide by 75 foot long grout mattress will be laid over the slough bottom and the edges of the mattress will be sloped into the slough bottom. Stockpiled sediment removed from the slough bottom will be placed over the grout mattress after installation and curing is complete in order to restore the bottom of the slough. The primary purpose of installing the grout mattress approximately twelve inches below slough bottom is to minimize potential impacts to tidewater goby habitat.
5. The banks of the slough in the pipeline crossing area will also be stabilized by installing concrete revetment walls along 75 linear feet of both banks. The banks of the slough will be sloped to a 2:1 angle to accommodate the revetment walls. The revetment walls will consist of stacked concrete bags secured with rebar stakes.
6. The temporary coffer dams will result in approximately 0.1 acre of temporary impacts to the waters of the State. The pipeline protection activities will permanently impact 0.027 acre of tidal slough channel and bank including 0.01 acre of salt marsh habitat and a 100 square foot patch of Lyngbye's sedge located on small clumps of soil that have slumped off the top edge of the bank and into the channel.
7. Compensatory mitigation is required for the permanent impacts to the channel and banks of Gannon Slough and Lyngbye's sedge. The Applicant has prepared a Lyngbye's sedge Revegetation and Monitoring Plan that involves transplanting the existing Lyngbye's sedges to an area located approximately 500 feet upstream of the project. The goal of the revegetation effort is to maintain or increase the number of individual transplanted sedges over a three to five year monitoring period. If the population is stable within a three to five year period, the revegetation project will be deemed successful. A decrease of the sedges by 20 percent or more at the end of the monitoring period will be considered unsuccessful, and additional mitigation will be required. To compensate for 0.027 acre of permanent impacts to the slough channel and banks, including 0.01 acre of salt marsh and brackish marsh wetland habitat, the Applicant will provide in-lieu funding to the City of Arcata for restoration of 0.10 acre of wetlands, riparian, and riverine habitat along Janes Creek, approximately three miles from the project. PG&E is responsible for securing 0.1 acre of property rights thru an open space easement.
8. Noncompensatory mitigation for the project includes timing construction activities with low tides and the use of Best Management Practices for erosion control and heavy equipment operation near a waterway.

9. The Applicant has applied for a Coastal Development Permit.
10. The Applicant has applied for authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers to perform the project under Nationwide Permit Numbers 3 and 33 (File No 299810N), pursuant to Clean Water Act, section 404.
11. The Regional Water Board, as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has determined that this project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption, section 15284 – pipelines, pursuant to CEQA.

Receiving Water: Gannon Slough in the Eureka Plain Hydrologic Unit No. 110.00

Filled or Excavated Area: Area Temporarily Impacted: 0.1 acre  
Area Permanently Impacted: 0.027 acre of tidal slough channel and bank

Total Linear Impacts: Length Temporarily Impacted: 20 linear feet  
Length Permanently Impacted: 150 linear feet of tidal slough bank

Dredge Volume: 85 cubic yards

Latitude/Longitude: 40.84758 N/124.07951 W

Accordingly, based on its independent review of the record, the Regional Water Board certifies that the Gannon Slough Gas Pipeline Protection Project (WDID No. 1B06033WNHU), as described in the application, will comply with sections 301, 302, 303, 306 and 307 of the Clean Water Act, and with applicable provisions of state law, provided that the Applicant complies with the following terms and conditions:

1. This certification action is subject to modification or revocation upon administrative or judicial review, including review and amendment pursuant to Water Code section 13330 and title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 3867.
2. This certification action is not intended and shall not be construed to apply to any discharge from any activity involving a hydroelectric facility requiring a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license or an amendment to a FERC license unless the pertinent certification application was filed pursuant to title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 3855, subdivision (b) and the application specifically identified that a FERC license or amendment to a FERC license for a hydroelectric facility was being sought.
3. This certification is conditioned upon total payment of any fee required under title 23, California Code of Regulations, section 2200, and owed by the Applicant.

4. The Regional Water Board shall be notified prior to the commencement of ground disturbing activities, with details regarding the construction schedule, in order to allow staff to be present onsite during construction, and to answer any public inquiries that may arise regarding the project.
5. A copy of this Order and the application submitted by the Applicant for this certification shall be provided to all contractors and subcontractors conducting the work, and shall be in their possession at the work site.
6. All project work shall be conducted as described in this Order and in the application submitted by the Applicant. It is the Applicant's responsibility to ensure that their contractor(s) are knowledgeable of the authorized project activities, BMPs, avoidance measures and mitigation measures contained in the application submitted by the Applicant. If the Regional Water Board is not notified of a significant alteration to the project, it will be considered a violation of this Order, and the Applicant may be subject to Regional Water Board enforcement actions.
7. BMPs for erosion, sediment and turbidity control shall be implemented and in place at commencement of, during and after any ground clearing activities or any other project activities that could result in erosion or sediment discharges to surface water.
8. No debris, soil, silt, sand, bark, slash, sawdust, rubbish, cement or concrete washings, oil or petroleum products, or other organic or earthen material from any construction or associated activity of whatever nature, other than that authorized by this Order, shall be allowed to enter into or be placed where it may be washed by rainfall into waters of the State. When operations are completed, any excess material or debris shall be removed from the work area. No rubbish shall be deposited within 150 feet of the high water mark of any stream. All exposed paper wrapping shall be removed from the concrete bags used for the revetment walls once the concrete has cured.
9. The Applicant shall implement the July 26, 2007 Lyngbye's sedge Revegetation and Monitoring Plan and the Wetland Mitigation Plan prepared by Transcon Environmental.
10. The Applicant shall submit compensatory mitigation monitoring reports to this office annually for three years or until the Lyngbye's sedge mitigation project is deemed successful based on the criteria contained in the Lyngbye's sedge Revegetation and Monitoring Plan. Monitoring reports for Lyngbye's sedge mitigation shall be submitted within 120 days of completing each annual monitoring and plant survey event that shall be conducted between May and August each year.
11. The Applicant shall submit documentation to demonstrate that 0.1 acre of property rights were secured through an open space easement for wetland mitigation activities within one year of issuance of this certification. The Applicant shall submit documentation to demonstrate that the City of Arcata has received the Applicant's in-lieu funding to implement the wetland mitigation plan within one year of issuance of this certification. The Applicant shall submit annual wetland mitigation monitoring

reports for the in-lieu wetland mitigation project activities conducted by the City of Arcata or shall be responsible for ensuring that the City of Arcata submits the annual reports in a timely manner. The first wetland mitigation monitoring report shall be submitted to this office by January 15, 2009 and shall document completion of the mitigation project implementation. The Applicant shall submit additional annual wetland mitigation monitoring reports by January 1 each year until the Applicant's portion of the City of Arcata's wetland mitigation project achieves the mitigation goals, objectives and success criteria described in the wetland mitigation plan. Wetland mitigation monitoring reports shall contain photos of the mitigation project areas and shall demonstrate complete implementation of the Wetland Mitigation Plan.

12. If, at any time, an unauthorized discharge to surface water (including wetlands, rivers or streams) occurs, or any water quality problem arises, the associated project activities shall cease immediately until adequate BMPs are implemented. The Regional Water Board shall be notified promptly and in no case more than 24 hours after the unauthorized discharge or water quality problem arises.
13. Disturbance or removal of vegetation shall not exceed the minimum necessary to complete the project.
14. Prior to implementing any change to the project that may have a significant or material effect on the findings, conclusions, or conditions of this Order, the Applicant shall obtain the written approval of the Regional Water Board Executive Officer.
15. The Regional Water Board may add to or modify the conditions of this Order, as appropriate, to implement any new or revised water quality standards and implementation plans adopted and approved pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act or Section 303 of the Clean Water Act.
16. The Applicant shall provide Regional Water Board staff access to the project site to document compliance with this certification.
17. In the event of any violation or threatened violation of the conditions of this certification, the violation or threatened violation shall be subject to any remedies, penalties, process or sanctions as provided for under applicable State or federal law. For the purposes of section 401(d) of the Clean Water Act, the applicability of any State law authorizing remedies, penalties, process or sanctions for the violation or threatened violation constitutes a limitation necessary to assure compliance with the water quality standards and other pertinent requirements incorporated into this certification. In response to a suspected violation of any condition of this certification, the Regional Water Board may require the holder of any federal permit or license subject to this certification to furnish, under penalty of perjury, any technical or monitoring reports the Regional Water Board deems appropriate, provided that the burden, including costs, of the reports shall bear a reasonable relationship to the need for the reports and the benefits to be obtained from the

reports. In response to any violation of the conditions of this certification, the Regional Water Board may add to or modify the conditions of this certification as appropriate to ensure compliance.

18. In the event of any change in control of ownership of land presently owned or controlled by the Applicant, the Applicant shall notify the successor-in-interest of the existence of this Order by letter and shall forward a copy of the letter to the Regional Water Board at the above address.

To discharge dredged or fill material under this Order, the successor-in-interest must send to the Regional Water Board Executive Officer a written request for transfer of the Order. The request must contain the requesting entity's full legal name, the state of incorporation if a corporation, and the address and telephone number of the person(s) responsible for contact with the Regional Water Board. The request must also describe any changes to the project proposed by the successor-in-interest or confirm that the successor-in-interest intends to implement the project as described in this Order.

19. Except as may be modified by any preceding conditions, all certification actions are contingent on: a) the discharge being limited to and all proposed mitigation being completed in strict compliance with the Applicant's project description, and b) compliance with all applicable requirements of the Water Quality Control Plan for the North Coast Region (Basin Plan).
20. The authorization of this certification for any dredge and fill activities expires on October 1, 2012. Conditions and monitoring requirements outlined in this certification are not subject to the expiration date outlined above, and remain in full effect and are enforceable.

If you have any questions or comments please call Dean Prat at (707) 576-2801.

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Robert R. Klamt  
Interim Executive Officer

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Original to: Mr. Rob Stiving, Pacific Gas and Electric Company, 245 Market Street,  
Mail Code N10A, San Francisco, CA 94105

Copies to: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, District Engineer, P.O. Box 4863, Eureka,  
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